



# The Newscastle



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## Making his Mark

# Renaissance Man Sudol to head Corps HQ Regulatory

By Mick Tharp

Flying at 400 miles an hour 400 feet above the aircraft carrier *Saratoga*, he helped his fellow Navy pilot avoid crashing their S-3 jet into the Red Sea. Dizzy from vertigo while scuba diving in a black underground Florida cavern, he grabbed a rock and regained his balance and breath. On site visits in southwestern deserts, he high-stepped away from rattlesnakes and pulled deer ticks off his legs.

Mark Sudol, the new chief of the Corps' Regulatory Branch, comes well equipped to handle the stress and emergencies of the job. After only 20 months as chief of the L.A. District's Regulatory Branch, the New Jersey

native heads to Washington facing unprecedented challenges but armed with a formidable blend of academic, military and professional experience. "My primary responsibility will be policy," he says. "I want to improve consistency across different branches, enhance communication among branches and improve the public's perception of the Corps."

L.A.'s loss clearly is D.C.'s gain. The ruggedly built Sudol is far more of a field man than an ivory tower bureaucrat, although his doctorate from UCLA in environmental science and engineering shows an exceptional intellectual side. Besides two graduate diplomas from the California school and an undergraduate degree from the University of Rochester, he worked two years in the private sector for two environmental consultancies and a year with his own start-up environmental services firm. Off and on since 1991, he's held several posts in the L.A. Regulatory Branch.

"We have excellent people in Regulatory across the country," Sudol says, "but because we have difficult jobs, we don't get the recognition we should." He explains that because Corps regulators must deal with thousands of permit applications each year, the workload doesn't allow for much beating of their own drums or blowing of their own horns. "We're



Mark Sudol

Continued on page 3

What do you get when you give  
eight speeches in eight weeks?

# Toastmaster Area Governor of the Year

By Mike Tharp

In February, 1973, the *Essayons* Toastmasters Club petitioned its international sponsors to let Mary Ann Mark, an L.A. District team member, become the first woman Toastmaster in the club's history. Less than a month later, the request was approved, and less than three months later, Toastmasters International itself amended its bylaws to let women become members.

Nearly three decades after that trailblazing precedent, Cindy Myrtetus, a contract specialist in Contracting Division, was named Toastmasters Area Governor of the Year. The wood and bronze plaque for "outstanding and exceptional leadership" was presented to her at an installation banquet at the 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron Restaurant at Van Nuys Airport July 13. Some 60 people, including Cindy's daughters Juliet and Amy, watched as District 52 Toastmaster leaders surprised Cindy with the award.

"I was amazed, amazed," recalls Cindy. "I didn't even know I was in the running."

As seen from the open-membership episode of the early '70s, the L.A. District and Toastmasters have shared a highly synergistic bond. Founded in Santa Ana in 1924, Toastmasters helps its members speak more effectively. Today, more than three million men and women of all ages and occupations belong to the group, whose training helps them organize activities, conduct meetings and speak in public. Each week, in clubs around the globe, 20 to 30 people meet for an hour and practice public speaking. The *Essayons* club will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in February 2005.

In 1991, Ed Louie of PPMD had been tasked with a

presentation  
before a  
Project Re-  
view Board.

"I was sort  
of gun-shy  
in front of an au-  
dience," Ed re-  
members. "My  
voice would qua-  
ver, my face

would turn red, my hands would shake." Ed joined Toastmasters, successfully made the PRB presentation and wound up becoming both an area and a division governor in the mid-'90s.

"Ed's an arm-twister," Cindy says with a smile. He persuaded her to join Toastmasters in 1996, after her baptism-by-fire loomed as an instructor for a project course. Before that, the 21-year Corps veteran had no public speaking experience. "Public speaking is most people's number-one fear, including mine," she says. "I figured it was time to get over it."

And how. She steadily ascended the Toastmasters hierarchy, leading the club in milestones for educational goals, membership, dues and speech contests. She worked steadily toward achieving her Competent Toastmaster certificate and held nearly all the club offices. She volunteered to be Area Governor for Area 11, Division C for 2001-02 and was responsible for mentoring four or five other clubs in attaining their educational and leadership goals.

To reach "Distinguished Toastmaster status this year,



By Jennie A. Salas

***Toastmasters District Governor  
Enrico Pena presents the plaque  
for Area Governor of the Year  
contract specialist Cindy Myrtetus.***

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working on the sidelines, making the tough decisions,” he adds, “instead of showing people that we’re protecting wetlands. People are upset with us because they don’t see the big picture—that we’re working for the good of the environment and the nation.”

Sudol says one of his biggest tasks in the new assignment “will be to show the nation how well we do our job.” In addition to giving guidance on policy and other issues to all the Corps districts, he’ll also be responsible for dealing with Congress, the presidential staff, EPA, Fish & Wildlife, the Dept. of Justice, state agencies—“you name it.”

Competition for the high-profile Corps post was intense, with candidates applying from within the Beltway itself, several Districts and from outside agencies. Now, only months after Sudol and his wife Karleen bought a house in San Pedro (site of the Port of L.A., arguably the District’s busiest project area), they’re headed for a brand-new life on the East Coast.

For the boyishly bespectacled engineer, however, it will be something of a homecoming. Growing up in New Jersey, Sudol was a swamp rat. His family had a rowboat on a creek at the end of their road, and he used it to catch snakes, turtles and frogs. At age 14 he took his first water sample. He recalls passage of the 1972 Clean Water Act and how it got him interested in “water quality, pollution, wetlands—all that.”

As an undergrad, he familiarized himself with the ecology of upstate New York, the glacially formed peat bogs and fens of the region and toured the Great Lakes. His wetlands-immersion program continued when he became a Navy officer and was marched into Florida marshes for survival training.

As a Naval flight officer and later as an instructor for six years, Sudol flew S-3A aircraft in antisubmarine squadrons. He landed on aircraft carriers 198

times, and one of his several brushes with mortality came on his last day on the *Saratoga* off the coast of Aden. After chasing an unidentified “bogey” in their subsonic plane at 20,000 feet (which turned out to be a “friendly” sent to test their defenses), Sudol and his pilot were preparing to land. Because he was the most senior flight officer, Sudol had the least experienced flier with him in the cockpit. As they conducted a 180-degree high-G turn around the ship to slow their airspeed, Sudol noticed that the plane wasn’t level but descending rapidly from 800 feet. He quickly alerted the other pilot who pulled up the jet in time to avoid catastrophe. “At that speed, you don’t have a lot of time,” says Sudol with an understated grin.

His military experience has proved invaluable to the Corps. “Serving on an aircraft carrier is not like the day-to-day grind of the bureaucracy,” he says. “Someone can die if you don’t do your job right. You understand the importance of your job, but you learn to relax after your job is over. This has helped me in Regulatory to understand that people are the most important part of this job—you take care of your people and they’ll take care of you.” The grueling process of considering permit applications, for example, isn’t a life-or-death issue for Sudol, and he takes pains to encourage his team members “to take your job seriously, but don’t take it home.”

(Sudol was late for the interview about himself because, he said, “I had to take care of a personnel issue.” A team member had approached him in the lobby of the District building, and Sudol spent the next 30 minutes helping resolve the problem.)

As a flight instructor, he also learned to gauge how his students handled stress—another tool he used in managing the L.A. branch. Sudol believes that, after only a couple of weeks, he can tell how a new team member deals with the stresses of the job:

“Then I can help that person handle it better.”

He’s been scuba diving since 15 and has submerged himself all over the world. The Florida cavern incident, when he was diving with five others, also became a management-training template for Sudol. The bulb on his flashlight broke and sud-



*Lockheed S-3A Viking antisubmarine jet*

*Concept drawing of the new fire station.*



# Plans for hot new fire station take flight at March Air Base

By Matthew R. Weir  
452d Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

**MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE, Calif.** —In April of 2001, Hilton Cullpepper, Air Force Reserve Command assistant civil engineer, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on installation readiness.

“Real property maintenance funding for the Air Force is based on one percent of the plant replacement value,” he said. “At this rate, our facilities can be replaced only every 314 years.”

The March Field Fire Department defied those odds, breaking ground on a 30,000-square foot, \$6.3 million fire station Sep. 17.

The Los Angeles District of the Army Corps of Engineers awarded the contract to Alvarez Engineering, Inc. of Orange. Construction completion is scheduled to be within 18 months.

The contract also includes the demolition of the 36-year-old fire station, which does not meet standards for an Air Force fire station and is not up to current Air Force codes for earthquake preparedness.

The fire department responded to more than 600 fire incidents in 2001. More than 1/3 of them were for off-base calls.

“The old facility didn't meet the three-minute criteria for reaching either end of the flight line,” said March Fire Chief Kenneth Spicknall, “and it was not

able to house all our fire vehicles sufficiently. Right now, some of our trucks just have to sit outside.”

Getting weather beaten takes its toll on the vehicles, but allowing the vehicles to sit outside has “a more damaging effect on unit morale, according to Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Konersman.

“It hurts to know that after the fire fighters wash and clean their vehicles, they have to let them sit outside and get dirty again,” said Konersman.

The new facility will improve the quality of life for the 63-full-time and 36-reserve fire fighter unit and increase the mission capability. Additional office space will allow each section of the fire department: training, fire inspectors and safety, to have its own work area, creating fewer interruptions and more productivity.

“Right now, you can walk into the shared office space, with everyone in it, and see desks stacked with work and training materials,” said Konersman. “The fire fighters don't have any place to store anything.”

In its new location, the building will serve as a fire station and training facility. The March Fire Department brings in outside fire agencies, such as Boeing, Ontario and Long Beach, to help them train and maintain their qualifications for fighting aircraft fires.

When complete, the new facility will have a pool table, full gym, sauna, recreation area and a full-sized, lighted basketball court for the fire fighters,

Continued on page 16



# Great way to spend a day

Story and photos by  
Greg Fuderer

**ROSEMEAD, Calif.** —Several Los Angeles District team members were among 75 people who volunteered to remove debris and other trash from public lands at Bosque del Rio Hondo and other public areas next to Whittier Narrows Dam. The Saturday morning effort gave an increased measure of public health and safety in the area surrounding the dam.

Phil Serpa of the District's Con-Ops Division coordinated the cleanup with L.A. Parks and Recreation's David Jallo, Natural Areas Superintendent for Whittier Narrows, as part of National Public Lands Day. The cleanup is an annual event that brings volunteers together to improve the country's largest natural resource - its public lands.



***Boards were part of the trash removed.***

In addition to picking up biohazard waste and other debris, Tianen gave safety briefings to all the volunteers before they ventured out. "Stay in groups. If you find any biological wastes (i.e., needles, toilet paper, prophylactics) let me know and I will pick them up and place them in a biological waste container for disposal," she said.

Jallo viewed the cleanup as "a real positive event, real teamwork." He pointed to participation by several groups (Los Angeles Conservation Corps, the Whittier Narrow Mounted Assistance Unit and the Rio Hondo College science club) and an assortment of hikers, equestrians, youngsters and adults. Always the optimist, Jallo said, "There's more trash out there, so we still have more to do."

***Susan Tianen gives instructions to Scouts from Troop and Pack 325 before they start working.***



***Preparing to load the dump truck.***

National organizers expected more than 70,000 volunteers this year at some 500 sites in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The cleanup is a unique public-private partnership involving many federal, state and local land agencies that work closely with business partners and numerous nonprofit organizations.

"This is just what we needed," said Laura Just, a ranger with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, which maintains the Bosque along with several other properties in the nearby area.

Serpa provided gloves, trash bags and water for the volunteers and arranged for several Operations and Maintenance workers at the nearby base yard to operate heavy equipment to assist with loading and removing large objects and debris from the area. Louie Munoz, L.C. Gillens, Harold Lesure and Taleni "T" Tialino operated loaders, dump trucks and a water truck. "I'm glad to do it," Gillens said, speaking for the rest of the Operations workers who helped.

Also helping out was District Safety Officer Susan Tianen. In addition to picking up biohazard waste and other debris, Tianen gave safety briefings to all the volunteers before they ventured out.



# General Alert: Newly Minted Major Oversees District's Military Missions

By Mike Tharp

If there were a picture next to a dictionary definition of "Engineer, U.S. Army, 21<sup>st</sup> Century," it could well be of Kimberly Colloton.

Airborne—39 parachute jumps. Company commander—27<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion, Fort Bragg. Overseas assignment—Taegu, S. Korea. Bachelor's degree in architecture—Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. Master's in civil and environmental engineering — Stanford University.

And, since late August, promoted to major as the District's area commander for the High Desert—the National Training Center, Edwards AFB and Vandenberg AFB. In



that role, she's helping transform the District's managerial culture and structure "to a matrix from a stove-pipe" through new area support teams.

Sometimes there are so few green suits visible among the hundreds of District team members that it's natural to emphasize civilian customers and stakeholders. But Major Colloton's mission is to make sure that the military folks at bases

throughout the District get the same care as their civilian counterparts. "We want to work with them to keep them as our customers," she explains. "We want to show them we're concerned about their troops."

One issue close to both her head and heart is affordable housing for military families. While at Stanford, she joined a team studying how best to provide such housing for Bay Area public employees and others. That team's study competed with strategies from the University of California at Berkeley, UC Davis and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Colloton also examined how Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit organization, used "sweat equity" in places like Redwood City to ensure that residents became stakeholders in their new homes. "I want to look at new housing for NTC, maybe to privatize some of the base housing to make it so soldiers get quality housing."

The 10-year Army officer who came to L.A. in July from the Stanford campus clearly represents a recruiting poster for the modern Pentagon. She's smart, well-spoken, tough and compassionate. At her last three duty stations, she received enviable officer efficiency reports (which she asks not to be disclosed, showing that she's both modest and a team player). Despite all the entries on her bio—or maybe because of them—the Albany, N.Y., native remains humble and low-key. Being promoted to

major marks "the transformation into a grown-up world," she jokes, downplaying her 76-line, two-page resumé.

"Working in the District is such an important part of the Corps of Engineers," she says. "Everyone you work with out in the field expects you to know everything—from demolitions to contracts. Not a lot of my peers are able to get these experiences at a district because there are only a few slots for active military officers."

Although her younger brother is a captain in Special Forces, Colloton didn't have a military molecule in her DNA. She decided to pursue a ROTC scholarship to help her get through the five-year architecture curriculum at Rensselaer, one of the most highly regarded scientific and technical institutions on the east coast. "I decided to try it for a year," she recalls. "By graduation I was sure I wanted to go on active duty for four years. Since then, I just decided I liked it."

Her decade of assignments has included three years at Fort Hood, Texas, in platoon, company and battalion roles, managing a \$25 million public works budget in South Korea and two slots at the 27<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion. The latter unit was highly active in the Persian Gulf War, both in Saudi Arabia and Iraq, where six of its soldiers were killed in a freak explosion at an Iraqi airfield. Colloton says there's a memorial plaque for them outside the 27<sup>th</sup>'s dining hall at Fort Bragg.

Possibly her toughest gig yet was qualifying as jumpmaster. "That's one of the most stressful things I've been through," she admits. "But you have to pass if you want to command. I can't participate if I can't lead troops out of planes. That was one of my more pressured moments."

At the 27<sup>th</sup>, she was the first woman to hold down company commander and logistical officer posts. For females, the Army "isn't 50-50 yet," she says. "It's probably 10 percent. But over time it will get better. We take small steps. Everybody has treated me equally and given me opportunities to excel. I've never felt held back or limited. I've been fortunate to have bosses who let me go out and do good things."

In 2004 the bespectacled officer is scheduled to attend the Command General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. After that she hopes to be a battalion executive officer or operations officer somewhere.

When you meet Colloton, you forget the slogans. Be all that you can be. An Army of one. Instead, you have the clear and present notion that this woman could someday make general. "That would be completely gravy," she says, wide-eyed. "I wouldn't turn it down, but you never know. Right now I'm just taking it one day, one mission, at a time."

And succeeding.

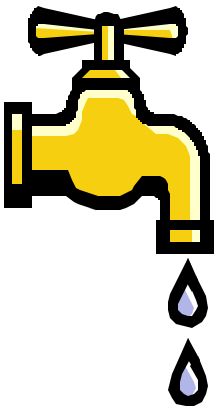


# Water, water everywhere...except L.A.

By Mike Tharp

**EL SEGUNDO, Calif.** —As Southern California endures yet another year of drought, the Army Corps of Engineers has launched an ambitious and useful project to recycle water for 10 cities in the South Bay area of Los Angeles county.

Employing a 30-mile-long latticework of underground pipelines connected to a network of pumping stations, storage reservoirs and treatment plants, the \$46.7 million project will ensure that a broad cross-section of community educational and recreational services will get enough



water. Numerous industrial and corporate customers will also receive the recycled wastewater after it is treated at the Hyperion Treatment Plant in El Segundo.

Representatives from the Corps and the West Basin Municipal Water District, the Corps' local sponsor, elected officials and others attended a formal signing ceremony Aug. 29 memorializing their teamwork on the project. West Basin's goal by 2020 is to replace half the water now im-

ported by the district with recycled water.

From the Victoria Regional Golf Course in Carson, under the fields of Cal State Dominguez Hill's new National Training Center to the Charles Wilson Community Park in Torrance, the project's infrastructure will furnish recycled water through miles of subterranean pipelines, called laterals, ranging in diameter from 12 to 42 inches. Recycled water—which, among other things, will be used to irrigate public golf courses, grassy traffic medians and a marsh and wildlife habitat—frees up valuable supplies of drinkable water.

Other customers for the recycled water will include the ARCO, Chevron and Mobil refineries, the Wilmington/L.A. industrial area, Palos Verdes Peninsula and the LAX/Westside area in Los Angeles County.

The project is the most recent local example of the Corps' nationally proclaimed shift in its priorities from megabuilder to environmental restorer. Since the beginning of the year, LTG Bob Flowers, the Corps' commander, has repeatedly emphasized the agency's commitment to a new set of environmental operating principles. For example, some 20 percent of the Corps' civil works budget is now devoted to environmental programs. And in testimony in June before a Senate hearing, Flowers said the Corps "must continue to seek a balance between environmental sustainability and development."

One segment of the Harbor/South Bay Water Recycling Project includes the Madrona Marsh Lateral Pipe-

line in Torrance, which will serve an existing site at the marsh. The Corps will thus contribute to a restoration project there designed to restore wildlife habitat and keep out polluted runoff.

Eventually, the project's transmission capillaries will be connected with those of the existing West Basin Water Recycling Project, which already offers alternate water resources to some 833,000 people in 17 southwest L.A. cities and unincorporated areas. Together, they will provide a more reliable and drought-proof water supply for the Los Angeles area and also directly reduce the amount of effluent discharged into Santa Monica Bay.

The pipeline extensions for Carson customers—Victoria Golf Course and Regional Park, traffic planners and Cal State Dominguez Hill's campus and under-construction training center—will meet an estimated annual recycled water demand of 786 acre feet. (An acre foot is the volume of water that would cover one acre to a depth of one foot, equal to 43,560 cubic feet.) When finished, the current project will deliver about 48,000 acre feet of recycled waste water. By 2020, the overall West Basin recycling program is expected develop up to 70,000 acre feet of alternative water supplies a year.

Cities benefiting from the project include Los Angeles, Carson, Torrance, Inglewood, Hawthorne, Rolling Hills, Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, Gardena, Palos Verdes and Compton. The Corps, which will provide 75 percent of the project's funding, is working closely with the West Basin Municipal Water District, which will furnish the remaining 25 percent.

Design and construction through various Corps-approved contractors is

expected to take six to seven months for each lateral pipeline. The main construction will consist of a series of 12 laterals and extensions of existing mainstream pipelines. Completion of the project is estimated in fiscal year 2005.

The Corps' project's timing is timely. Southern California in general and Los Angeles in particular are withering under ever-drier conditions. Los Angeles, for instance, usually gets about 15 inches of rain from July to June, but received just over four inches in the latest annual precipitation period. The result has been wildfires, economic cutbacks and calls for water conservation.

Famed California historian Carey McWilliams wrote in 1946: "God has never intended Southern California to be anything but desert—Man has made it what it is."

Now, thanks to the Corps and its local partners, Man will get some help.

***"If you can't bring water to  
Los Angeles, you bring  
Los Angeles to the water."  
—Chinatown, 1974***

# To coin a phrase



## They come in all shapes and sizes and if you don't carry yours, it could cost you!!!

Story by Mike Tharp  
Photos by Fred-Otto Egeler

When L.A. District Public Affairs Receptionist Delsie Sharp was awarded a “Commander’s Coin for Excellence” from BG Larry Davis this summer, she had no idea she was part of an amazing national trend.

The red, blue and bronze coin, 2 inches in diameter, is the latest local example of a Beanie Baby-type tsunami that has swept the uniformed services, engulfed government agencies and is now spreading to private sector corporations. Various terms “unit,” “challenge,” “honor” or “military,” the coins have become the currency of choice for awards, identification pieces and even—like stamps and baseball cards—collector’s items. Since the early ’80s, when a federal law first allowed wide discretion in designing government employees’ awards, coins have been palmed throughout all five military branches.

More recently, civilian agencies and local governments have started distributing them to their members and employees. And just this year, private companies have begun to embrace the idea. “Now they’re getting out into the civilian population,” says Maurice Green, general manager of Birmingham, Ala.-based Military Service Co.



***Military Service Company’s Paula Johnson shows off the cog wheel (next page) and a Eagle Scout pendant.***

“I’m going after business corporations to do—not just coins—but medallions heavy as a hockey puck.” The retired Marine lieutenant colonel says his firm’s sales have doubled in the past year.

From a handful in the Vietnam War era, the number of coins has metastasized into the tens of thousands. Probably every U.S. military unit now has its own; individual campaigns (“Operation Just Cause” in Panama) and special groups (POWs, veterans) are commemorated in coins; fire and police departments, rescue squads, Boy Scouts, fraternities and defense contractors hand them out. Most are made of antique bronze, but custom orders include antique silver, nickel- and gold-plated coins.

Dozens of companies have moved into the market. Many of them post their wares and prices on Web sites, like Pacific West Marketing, but the military grapevine gets the word out on good deals and neat designs. “We can do just about any design a customer wants,” commented Ed Shriber, from Pacific West. “We can even help with the design from a thumbnail sketch and respond in a couple of days if it faxed to us.”

Like the reclusive Tyco company that makes Beanie Babies, origins of the coin phenomenon are murky. Some trace its roots back to ancient Rome where soldiers were sometimes given coins for



gallantry. Another theory is that, in 17<sup>th</sup> century Britain, metal buttons, often embossed with distinctive designs, were used in trade as equivalents to money. Yet a third tale suggests that a World War I American aviator, rich and from the Ivy League, had bronze medallions cast for the men in his squadron. One pilot was shot down over Germany, escaped from the Germans who'd taken his ID, and avoided a French firing squad only by showing them the medallion in a pouch around his neck. A World War II version has dogfaces getting coins when they mustered out.



***One of the many unique hand stamped and painted shapes that is the Commanding General's from the U.S. Armor Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky.***

Generally accepted coinage history declares that the modern manifestation started in Vietnam with the Green Berets. According to an article in *Soldier's Magazine*, the tradition started in the early 1960s: "A member of the 11<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group took old coins, had them over-stamped with a different emblem, then presented them to unit members....A former commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> SFG picked up on the idea, becoming the first to mint a unit coin for a U.S. military unit. The 10<sup>th</sup> Group remained the only Army unit with its own coin until the mid-1980s."

Then coins began to rain like, well, pennies from heaven. From elite units, the coin custom filtered throughout the whole Army, then other branches and finally, in the '90s, the ritual exploded into a fad. Military Service, the Birmingham company, now stocks 148 different coins and "a huge number" of custom-ordered coins, says Green, who served as a Marine officer in Vietnam. One international security firm just ordered 500 coins from him, and he does business with such major defense contractors as Boeing, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin. Raytheon, for example, ordered a key chain coin engraved with its Maverick Missile system. "I'm going after insurance companies, naval hospitals, military museums, big corporations," he adds. "It's almost an endless market."

Today the coins serve as "attaboys" to reward jobs well done which don't quite qualify for a medal

or monetary rewards. As they've proliferated, commercialization has led to some abuses, including overspending and counterfeiting. In 2000, reported the Wall Street Journal, the Army proposed that only colonels and generals could hand out coins. But an outcry from soldiers worldwide quashed the idea. The Journal quoted LTC Paul Mittelstaedt, "If the

Army is so worried about the money spent on coins, buy one less M-1 tank or B-2 bomber and fund the coin program for the next 10 years."

Coins will be around for a lot longer than that. One reason was summarized by SGT Joel E. Welsh on the [www.militarycoins.com](http://www.militarycoins.com) Web site: "For years

after I'm out of the service, paperwork and awards and COA's will have long been lost. But coins will remain, with all the pride and symbolism that they hold. They will be a constant reminder of all the personal pride and hard work that I've put into my career."

The original coin also involved a gunfighter-like standoff. In any hootch bar in Vietnam, a soldier could brandish his coin and challenge his neighbor to display his. If he showed it, the challenger bought the round; if he didn't, drinks were on him. (The coins are said to have replaced specially engraved bullets and, as warrior testosterone kicked in, even 105 mm. cannon shells.)

In more sober military times, the challenge has assumed other permutations. Randy Riggins, who as a U.S. Army major was area commander for the Corps in Central America in the late '80s, recalls he was once skydiving with other paratroopers. "As we were falling, this guy pulls out his airborne coin and flashes it at me," Riggins says with a laugh. "So I had to show him mine."

(A few Web sites: [www.pacificwestmarketing.com](http://www.pacificwestmarketing.com); [www.mscebsco.com](http://www.mscebsco.com); [www.militarycoins.com](http://www.militarycoins.com); [www.honorcoins.com](http://www.honorcoins.com) )

## Sleep apnea

# To sleep or not to sleep, that is the question

By Mike Tharp

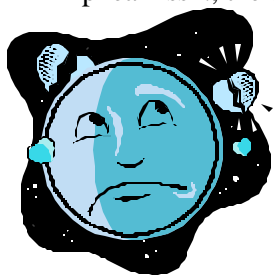
We all know how rest-less it feels: the drowsiness that comes on little cat feet (or on huge leonine paws) when we're at the desk, facing the computer screen. Or sitting round a conference table at an after-lunch meeting. Our eyelids seem as heavy as canvas tent flaps. We can almost feel our heartbeat and breathing slow to hibernation rates.

What most of us--luckily--don't know is what sometimes happens next. We fall fast asleep in the chair, body slumped, head back, mouth open like a beached mackerel. Then the noises begin: *Glauuunh! Uuuggh! Aooooock!*

For some Americans, and a few District team members, the nasal, glottal, tracheal and septal sounds blurring from a sleeper's face are symptoms of something far worse than mere snoring.

### Apnea.

The word itself is Greek, literally meaning "without breath." The condition refers to a blockage of your airway while you sleep. Untreated, says the American Sleep Apnea Assn., the disorder can cause high blood pressure and other cardiovascular disease, memory problems, weight gain, impotency and headaches. It may also be responsible "for job impairment and motor vehicle crashes," the association says, estimating that 12 million Americans suffer from the ailment.



John Gill, a biologist and environmental manager in Planning Division, is of those Americans. Mike Roberts in Planning is another. Gary Burger with Internal Review didn't have apnea, but he did have a severe snoring problem.

Each of these team members has dealt with the issue in his own way. Their strategies may be useful to anyone else confronting what is clinically defined as a cessation of breath that lasts at least 10 seconds.

The most common symptoms are loud snoring and excessive daytime sleepiness. Sleep apnea is more likely to

occur in men than women, and is most common among overweight men older than 40. A family history of apnea increases the risk two to four times.

John Gill believes he had sleep apnea "for 10 years before I ever did anything about it." Like most people with it, he knew it was uncomfortable and sometimes disturbing—"you're suffocating a little with every breath."

What Gill did about it was to go to a sleep clinic, in his case, the Inland Sleep Clinic in San Bernardino. He allowed specialists at the clinic to conduct their tests on him while he spent the night. They hooked him up to electrocardiograms and attached electrodes to his legs; they monitored him with abdominal and thoracic belts and recorded sounds from his throat with a microphone, measured how much saturated oxygen was in his blood.

Their recordings of what happened to him look like a Cal Tech seismograph during a series of aftershocks. Afterwards, they concluded: "The patient demonstrated severe obstructive sleep apnea characterized by ...40 events per hour in association with oxygen desaturations."

In layman's language, Gill—who appeared to be zonked out on the clinic bed—was sleeping only at 71 percent efficiency because respiratory disturbances kept jerking him awake. He might not have known it at the time, or even remembered the no-doze jolts, but his sleep was being routinely disrupted.

Gill got the message. "It's a very manageable disorder," he explains. "You can immediately relieve your problem and raise your productivity." The clinic outfitted him with a mask which he wears each night. There are several types, but basically the mask promotes clearer airways.

Although Roberts, a technical writer/editor in Planning, displayed classic symptoms for several years, he didn't realize until early this summer that he was an apneac. "I had trouble staying awake," he recalls. "I was falling asleep in front of the computer at work, couldn't stay awake at meetings."

At home his wife was worried because his snores would often be followed by spells of several seconds when he'd stop breathing altogether. Roberts went to the VA Sleep Clinic in Loma Linda and underwent the conventional tests. He learned that 80 times an hour he

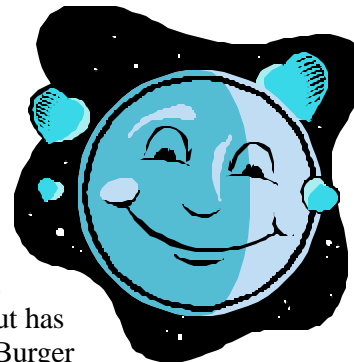
stopped breathing—maybe only for a few seconds, “but it meant I wasn’t getting much rest.”

He began wearing a continuous positive airway pressure mask, which provides a flow of air to splint the airway open during sleep. Because his saturated oxygen levels were low, he was also outfitted with an oxygen bottle. “I still feel tired,” Roberts admits, “but I sleep much better, snore less and it’s easier to stay awake during the day and concentrate on my work.”

Burger just snored. When he was single, as he points out, that didn’t make much difference because “who’s going to wake you up and tell you you’re snoring?” But after getting married eight years ago, and hearing a steady crescendo of nocturnal complaints, Burger had an operation. A doctor drilled into each nostril to clear obstructions. The operation didn’t work. He went back for a second time, and the doctor suggested cleaning up “a deviated septum.”

Enter the emu. Or rather, the oil of emu. Researching online, Burger read about the oil of the giant Australian

bird which is related to the ostrich. Emu oil acts as an anti-inflammatory to allow the passage of more air. He ordered a vial from an online distributor, administered it with a Q-tip and, “it worked!” The oil hasn’t totally eliminated his snoring, but has reduced it by about 80 percent, Burger reckons. “Instead of waking up three or four times a night, now it’s maybe once a month,” he says.



So if you’re fearful of zzzz-ing during an important meeting or—worse—while you’re driving home, you can decide for yourself if you have sleep apnea. Some sources:

- [www.sleepapnea.org](http://www.sleepapnea.org)
- The Inland Sleep Center (which treated some of the team members): 909 883-8058.

There are plenty of others you can find with ordinary Internet search engines. Or ask one of your District colleagues who’s been treated for the disorder.

Sweet dreams!

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#### **SUDOL—Continued from page 3**

denly Sudol literally didn’t know up from down. All he could see were the phantasmagoric lights of his fellow divers, whose beams confused him. Vertigo ensued. Sudol realized bubbles from his air tank were gurgling in the opposite direction from where he thought they should be. He found the closest outcrop, grabbed it and held on. “I caught my breath and thought for a few seconds,” he remembers. “I learned that before you make decisions, think for a few seconds and get your bearings. That’s helped me in Regulatory.”

During his tenure in L.A., the Regulatory Branch dealt with several highly publicized and sharply politicized projects: the Port of L.A.’s expansion, a proposed 3,000-home development at Ahmanson Ranch, a Home Depot in San Luis Obispo, a study of the critical habitat of an Arizona pygmy owl. In each of these and other deliberations, Sudol has applied in practice what LTG Robert Flowers declared in his June address at the annual conference of U.S. mayors: “Today we are more aware of the consequences of our actions, and we’re taking steps to correct the mistakes of the past. As members of your communities, we share the same concerns as you—the desire for economic development while balancing the need for environmental sustainability.”

Sudol has been on both sides of the permitting process—as an applicant and as a regulator. He’s

met a budget and hired people for his own company. He’s led military officers and enlisted personnel. As an academic, his UCLA dissertation evaluated the success of Corps mitigation actions in Orange County. “The Corps wanted to see the results,” he says. “It was a public test, and we changed our mitigation guidelines to address the concerns in my dissertation. We are critical of ourselves—we want to do things better. You’re not going to find too many agencies willing to do that.”

Besides the adventure of moving to a new city and new job, the Sudols also face another challenge: Their son Alec just turned 2, and they’re discovering that there’s a reason “the Terrible Twos” are called that. Karleen, a Cerritos, Calif. native who just earned her own marine biology doctorate from UCLA in June, is looking forward to experiencing her first real winter. Her research focused on nutrient dynamics in bays and estuaries, something of great interest in the Chesapeake region.

In Sudol’s preternaturally neat Los Angeles office, atop a bookcase, sit two objects. One is a wooden sculpture of two killer whales. The other is a model of the S-3 antisubmarine jet. “Animals and airplanes,” observes Sudol. “That’s me.”

But as L.A. District team members know—and as Corps people in Washington and all over the U.S. will soon learn—with Mark Sudol, there’s a lot more.



# L.A. County Drainage Area project wins prestigious public works award

By Mike Tharp

The Los Angeles County Drainage Area flood control project won one of the nation's most prestigious public works awards at a ceremony in Kansas City, Mo., Sept. 23.

The American Public Works Assn., with 67 chapters and 26,000 members in North America, cited the "extraordinary partnership" among the managing agencies—including the L.A. District of the Corps—public officials and contractors as one of the reasons for picking the project.

"Throughout the six years of LACDA construction," the association stated, "the channel maintained its flood control function. During construction, vehicular, railroad and utility bridges remained operable as well." APWA also praised LACDA for being completed five years ahead of schedule and \$150 million under budget, at a final cost of \$216 million.

Other projects receiving APWA awards included a park at San Antonio's famous River Walk, renovation at Boston Harbor, seismic rehabilitation of the Los Angeles City Hall and a light rail system expansion in Portland, Ore. Altogether, projects in 11 states were recognized by APWA at its annual meeting in Kansas City.

"Your selection puts you in a very elite group of winners," Lee Hawkins, APWA's director of awards and recognition, wrote to the District. LACDA "epitomize(s) the

public works profession and our association."

The LACDA project was characterized by several innovative engineering solutions, such as modifying the "noses" of bridge piers, which eliminated the need to raise many bridges. This single innovation significantly reduced the cost and duration of the project and minimized traffic disruptions in the area.

LTC John V. Guenther, deputy commander, represented the District and the Corps at the ceremony.

Founded in 1937, APWA is the largest and oldest public works association in the U.S. Members include public agencies, private sector companies and individuals involved in public works goods and services.

The District's project manager was Nino J. Issakhan; Christopher J. Stone represented Los Angeles County. When completed, LACDA's flood control capability affected 500,000 residents and 177,000 structures in 14 communities spread over 82 square miles along the Los Angeles River.



By Kim Matthews



**Robert Stuart, Bruce Tyler and COL Richard G. Thompson at the presentation of the Toastmaster of the Year award at Engineering Day.**



Bruce Tyler received the Toastmaster of the Year award for being supportive of the club by sponsoring new members, participating at club meetings regularly and attending officer's training. He also took the initiative in determining the procedures by which club members can receive reimbursement for their membership dues through CEFMS.



# Ruh Roh! It's Scooby time!



*Benita Gross relaxes with her Scooby Doo collection.*

Story & Photo by  
Kim Matthews

**LOS ANGELES, Calif.** —What started as sibling rivalry with her sister Vanessa in high school has become a passion for Benita Gross, a computer specialist intern with the Information Management Office.

Benita said she “couldn’t let her beat me,” and began collecting Scooby Doo items to compete with her sister’s Taz collection.

Since then, her collection has grown from a single videotape of “Scooby Doo! and the Witch’s Ghost” to almost 30 items. Her pieces include other tapes, the complete toy prize collection from Wendy’s restaurants, a Scooby Doo Monopoly game, a watch, a stuffed Scooby Doo and clothing like slippers, socks, gloves, a T-shirt and ear muffs. Benita has even decorated her car with a Scooby Doo theme with seat covers, a steering wheel cover and seat belt cushions.

Her family and friends have given her many of the pieces in her collection. Most of her videotapes were presents from her mother. She estimates her collection to be worth \$400 to \$500.

She said her most interesting piece is the Scooby Doo Monopoly game, given to her on her birthday by a close

friend who knew she collected anything Scooby.

“Scooby Doo on Zombie Island” is Benita’s favorite piece in her collection because it has creatures that actually existed in the story, not just some spooky effects that were explained away at the end of the story.

Benita’s five-year-old daughter, Jasmine, constantly asks if she can have the videotapes after she moves out. Benita just laughs and tells her, “No, those are mine. You can watch them whenever you want, but these are mommy’s.” Benita has started Jasmine with her own collection of Disney items. They get approximately one Disney video per month in the mail.

Benita attended the Scooby Doo movie on the opening night with her daughter. While many other parents were there as a result of their children’s yearning to see their favorite cartoon character come to life, Benita was the one in her family who insisted on seeing the movie as soon as possible. The ticket stubs from that show are two of her most-prized possessions.

While Benita doesn’t attend conventions or hover over Ebay auctions to add to her collection, she does go online to look for movies she doesn’t have yet.

Benita’s mother has recently caught her daughters’ hobby bug as well and will be collecting Tweety Bird.

# In Brief....Around LAD

## Did you hear?

There's a new way of getting the news. No more email messages about blood drives, maintenance work in the parking structure or brown bag events parked in your inbox. Now for all the latest information about the world we live in 9 to 5, 7 to 3:30, or whatever your daily tour of duty may be, you must turn to the daily bulletin on the district's intranet. Changes will be coming to OUTLOOK soon! We'll keep you posted on an even better way to access information.

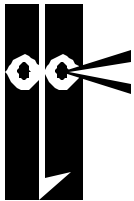


## Speaker's Bureau

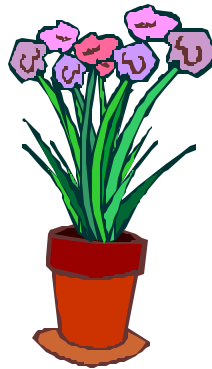
**Terry Wotherspoon**, Chief, Maintenance Unit, El Monte, CA., spoke to the Kiwanis Club this month in Fullerton, CA. Members were interested in learning about the Brea Dam. Terry spoke to the group about the Corps' role and responsibilities in maintaining the dam. He also spoke about the dam's purpose and the area it protects.



## Out on the Net



Check out the district's new internet website. It's got a whole new look. The Public Affairs Office welcomes you to view the calendar of events for the latest information about what's going on around the district. If you have something to add send a message to [publicaffairs-spl@usace.army.mil](mailto:publicaffairs-spl@usace.army.mil)



## In Sympathy

**Annie Palmer**, a Real Estate Division team member in the Acquisition Branch passed away over the weekend of September 14. Services were at Forest Lawn Sep. 27.

## Welcome to New Hires—as of October 7, 2002

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| William Miller      | Planning    |
| Ronald Musgrave     | CONOPS      |
| Louis Uptmor        | CONOPS      |
| Anthony Mazzola     | CONOPS      |
| Steven Peacock      | Planning    |
| Michael McCary      | Planning    |
| Sherrie Larson      | Safety      |
| Billie Jean Carlton | Real Estate |
| Lauren Holman       | CONOPS      |

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Robert Verkede     | Planning    |
| Laurie Ikuta       | CONOPS      |
| Lisa Dobson Snyder | Planning    |
| Roland Tabije      | Planning    |
| Cheryl Hart        | CONOPS      |
| Veronica Gonzalez  | Real Estate |
| Lawrence Perry     | CONOPS      |
| Rosalie Vengua     | PPMD        |

## The 2002 Combined Federal Campaign continues!

Be generous when your keyworker stops by! CFC allows you to help others in a big way with very little pain in your wallet.





# Congressional recognition given to Hansen Dam project staff

Congressman Harold Berman of the 26th District and COL Richard G. Thompson presented members of the Hansen Dam swim lake repair project with certificates of appreciation. The following received certificates:

From the Corps of Engineers:

Larry L. Massey, Dave Watanabe, Emmanuel J. Molina, Carvel Bass, Joseph Flynn, Roger Berg, Craig Baba, Arnold R. Gelacio, Hap Pho, Arthur Jung, Tom Sage, Robert Kwan, Phillip Eng, Francis Omoregie, David Pham, Thomas Cisneros, Daniel Carrasco, Mark Weintraub, Nedenia Kennedy, Greg Fuderer, Edward B. Louie, Charles S. Dwyer, Katie Parks, Patricia Trainer, Jennie Salas, Daniel Moore, Christopher Kronick, Barbara Cover Spear, Rich Ciranny, Donald Moser, Christopher Sands and William Halczak.



Contracting companies receiving certificates were:

Stronghold Engineering:

Beverly Bailey, Scott Bailey, Dave Willemssen, Duane Partida, Dave Bennett, David Gollinger, Jennifer Fogg, Kamel Khalil.

Reyes Construction:

Joe Reyes, Bart Cook.

Tetra-Tech:

Robert Hall, Yen-Hsu Chen.

City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks:

Mike Clouse, Gilbert Alvarez, Erick Chang, Robert Fawcett.



## Continued from page 2

for instance, the club needed someone to make eight speeches between mid-May and late June. Up stepped President Cindy and made the eight speeches over the next eight weeks. “I didn’t want to let down the rest of the team,” Cindy explains. In addition, Area 11 earned Distinguished status, as did Division C—for the first time in its history. Summarizes Cindy: “It was a really good year—a lot of hard work, camaraderie and teamwork. I’m proud of our accomplishments.”

It became a clear choice for the district governor, two lieutenant governors and four division governors to pick Cindy as Area Governor of the Year.

Like Ed Louie and dozens of other L.A. District Toastmaster members, Cindy charts a close course between her

Corps duties and Toastmaster skills. In January, for example, she was assigned to address a SAME seminar in San Diego about new contracting rules. More than 175 persons attended. “Toastmasters gave me self-confidence and a leadership component,” she says. “You learn how to think and speak on your feet. You get to practice and you get to make mistakes. It’s like vaudeville before you go on to a big audience.”

In San Diego, the Pittsburgh, Penn. native calmly and deftly handled the crowd, explaining the new contracting universe and answering questions. After taking nearly two years to deliver her very first two Toastmaster speeches, the 2001-02 Area Governor of the Year has turned panic into panache.

“I’d recommend Toastmasters to anybody,” she says. The sentiment is obviously mutual.

who spend 12 24-hour shifts there each month.

“The quality of life will be 100 times better than what the fire fighters had in the old station house,” said Spicknall.

The new fire station was the only major new facility project the base anticipated out of nearly 400 major facility repair, maintenance or replacement projects on March’s backlog.

“Everything else will have to be maintained with the limited funds available to us,” McPhee said in April 2001. He also said they have a current deficiency of more than 250 lodging rooms on base and requirements for major additions to the Fitness Center and the Communications facility, and that he didn’t see this new construction happening for quite some time due to the lack of facility project funding.

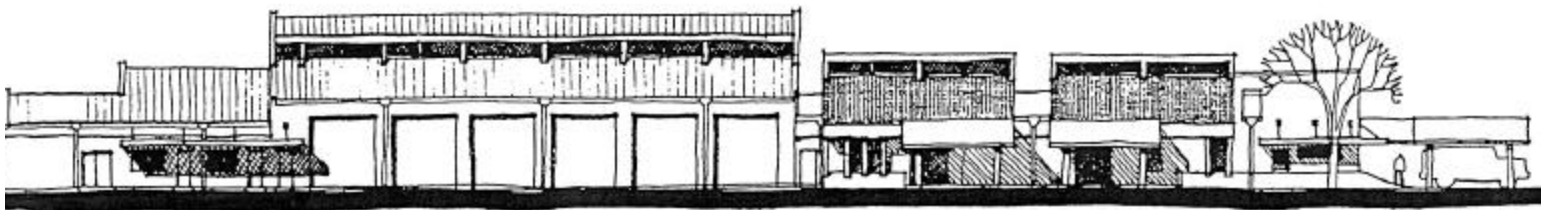
“To say the construction of this complex makes us feel appreciated isn’t big enough,” said Spicknall. “This facility will bring us into the 21st century.”

L.A. District has a long history at March, from when it was the Army Air Field to being an Air Force base and now an Air Reserve base. In 1940 the Corps designed and constructed Army Air Corps projects from the Quartermaster Corps. During war-time, the air base was camouflaged so well to look like fields and orchards and farm buildings that many of our pilots had difficulty finding their own air-fields.

In the early ’90s, two large fuel storage tanks were rehabilitated, and bermed buildings, the headquarters building and their traffic management office were constructed under Corps management.

Other Corps projects at March include building for the Armed Forces radio and television, a pair of buildings for Air Force audit and IMO, dorms, a dining hall and child development center. The last three have been turned over to the community for redevelopment. The last work there was in 1997-98 and included construction of base civil engineer shops and renovation on several buildings.

*Concept drawing of the new fire station.*



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